SUPERIOR COURT BERGEN COUNTY

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APR 87 2009
ERICK COURT OF NEW JERSE
COUNTY OF BENCEN

AL KOWALSKI, on behalf of himself and all others similarly situated,

Plaintiff,

-VS-

YELLOWPAGES.COM, LLC, AT&T INC., and their Predecessors, Successors, and/or Assigns, and JOHN DOES 1 – 10 (being those officers, employees, directors, or other individuals who are responsible for, or participated in the conduct forming the basis of the Plaintiffs' claims) and CORPORATE ROES 1 – 10 (being entities, corporations, or other companies not herein named who are responsible for, or participated in the conduct forming the basis of the Plaintiffs' claims),

Defendants.

NEW JERSEY SUPERIOR COURT LAW DIVISION: BERGEN COUNTY

DOCKET No.: 6-3316-09

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT

CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT FOR VIOLATIONS OF THE NEW JERSEY CONSUMER FRAUD ACT

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I. INTRODUCTION

This action concerns deceptive and fraudulent business practices perpetrated by YELLOWPAGES.COM ("Yellow Pages") upon consumers and business consumers throughout the United States. Yellow Pages is an online advertising service and a "wholly owned subsidiary of AT&T. . . . [Yellow Pages] is uniquely able to offer searchable directory listings. [Yellow Pages is an] online source for comprehensive national and local business information. The [Yellow Pages] distribution network provides exposure to more than 100 million monthly consumer business searches. Consumers can locate merchants, search White Pages directories, research products and services, obtain maps and directions, and plan entertainment, leisure and travel activities." Yellow Pages is similar to the Yellow Pages book that is still distributed throughout the United States but advertising appears on the internet. Yellow Pages' business is soliciting advertising from consumers and business consumers. Yellow Pages represents to customers that their ads will appear on certain areas of the internet and will receive prominence in certain internet searches. As stated below, the methodology employed by Yellow Pages to siphon advertising revenue from Consumers is deceptive and misleading resulting in consumers being forced to pay for advertising they either didn't want or were misled as to the nature, duration and/or prominence of the advertising.

¹ Cite is available at: http://www.yellowpages.com/about. Last visited March 1, 2009.

II. NATURE AND SUMMARY OF THE ACTION

- 1. This class action complaint sets forth facts that show that Yellow Pages has derived a methodology of the solicitation of consumers and business consumers for advertising that is akin to the age old basic principals of extortion. Yellow Pages' method violates basic principals of New Jersey's Consumer Fraud Act as well as the basic tenements of every consumer protection statute throughout the United States. Yellow Pages disregard for the principals and equity of good faith and fair dealing that is inherent within every bargained for exchange is appalling and must be stopped immediately.
- 2. Specifically, Yellow Pages has derived a scheme where a sales representative will discuss certain opportunities available to the consumer/business consumer (hereinafter referred to singularly as "Consumer"). If a Consumer expresses an interest in advertising with Yellow Pages, then the representative will give the consumer a tacit and cursory overview of where the Consumer's ad might appear and what the monthly cost could be. Most importantly, the representative will ask the Consumer's permission to record the conversation between the representative and the Consumer.
- The recorded conversation asks the Consumer to state that the Consumer agrees to all of the terms and conditions that had been set forth by the representative (the "Oral Representation"). For the conversation to continue, the Consumer must state their assent to the terms and conditions and any other items set forth by the representative. However, the representative has never gone through all of the terms and conditions of the agreement between the Consumer and the representative.
- 4. Sometime shortly thereafter, a contract entitled, "Contract for Internet Yellow Pages.com Advertising" will be sent via fax or email to the Consumer. The Consumer's name is

listed on the signature line. The contract is a three page document – two of the pages are entitled "Terms and Conditions for Internet Advertising". These two pages of terms is in all small print and states, most interestingly, that the term of the Contract commenced upon the oral acquiescence of the Consumer while the Consumer was speaking with the representative.

- 5. When a consumer refuses to sign the Contract and does not wish to proceed with the advertising with Yellow Pages, the Consumer is informed that they are already under Contract with Yellow Pages and cannot now void the Contract. Yellow Pages grounds this premise on their reliance on the Oral Representation of the Consumer.
- 6. The aforegoing scenario is violative of the law for several reasons:
 - a. The Consumer is not privy to many material terms that suddenly appear in the documents that are sent to the Consumer but never stated to the Consumer on the phone:
 - i. The Consumer never agreed to an actual price term, the consumer does not learn the actual consideration required by Yellow Pages until the consumer receives the fax purporting to state that a Contract is already in place;
 - ii. The Consumer NEVER receives any actual written statement of where the ads will appear – simple headings are included, but this does not suffice for specificity of what exactly the consumer is paying for;

- iii. The Consumer receives a two page terms and conditions document with many material terms that are not discussed by the sales representative (this is discussed in detail below).
- b. In consideration of the above, there is no contract formed between Yellow Pages and the Consumer. Yellow Pages assertion of an agreement between the parties is in contravention of the law as there is no meeting of the minds on many of the essential and material terms and conditions asserted by Yellow Pages. Thus Yellow Pages threat of collection and legal action to coerce the Consumer into accepting the agreement is tantamount to fraud, extortion and a deceptive business practice.
- 7. Therefore, Plaintiff brings this class action on behalf of others similarly situated who are victims of the deception and fraud at the hands of the Defendants.

III. JURISIDICTION AND VENUE

- 8. Jurisdiction over the Defendants is proper under New Jersey Jurisprudence under the United States Constitution, New Jersey State Constitution, Article VI, and Gendler & Co. v. Telecom Equipment Corp., 508 A.2d 1127 (N.J. 1986) (permitting exercise of long-arm jurisdiction over non-resident defendant to the full extent permitted by due process of law); Avdel Corp. v. Mecure, 277 A.2d 207 (N.J. 1971) (observing that New Jersey's long-arm jurisdiction extends to the "outermost limits permitted by the United States Constitution").
- 9. Venue is proper as Plaintiff, as the class representative, is a resident of Rochelle Park, in the County of Bergen, in the State of New Jersey.
- 10. Venue is also proper in this court because a substantial portion of the transactions complained of occurred in this county and the products at issue were advertised, promoted, sold, and distributed in this county. Defendant has received substantial compensation from the sales of these products in this county and by doing business has had effects in this county.
- Defendants transact business and have availed themselves of the forum of the State of New Jersey and Bergen County; thus, Jurisdiction and Venue are proper wherein brought in the State of New Jersey, County of Bergen.

IV. PARTIES

- 12. Plaintiff provides plumbing services throughout the state of New Jersey. Plaintiff's principal place of business is 71 Central Avenue, Rochelle Park, New Jersey. Plaintiff also resides in Bergen County.
- Defendant, Yellow Pages.com LLC, was incorporated in the State of Delaware and is a New Jersey foreign limited liability company that offers internet advertising services. Yellow Pages' headquarters is at 611 N. Brand Boulevard, Glendale, CA 91203 and is a wholly owned subsidiary of AT&T Inc.
- 14. Defendant AT&T, Inc., was incorporated in the State of Delaware. Defendant AT&T owns Defendant Yellow Pages. AT&T Inc.'s headquarters is 208 South Akard Street, Dallas, Texas 75202.

V. BACKGROUND AND NATURE OF THE DECEPTIVE PRACTICE

The Initial Contact Between Plaintiff and Yellow Pages

- 15. On October 31, 2008, Al Kowalski contacted Yellow Pages.com for the purpose of learning more about advertising on the internet with the Yellow Pages.
- Plaintiff was then directed to speak to a Yellow Pages sales representative. In this case, Plaintiff spoke with Mr. Royce Brown (the "Representative" or "Mr. Brown").
- 17. Plaintiff conveyed to Mr. Brown that he would like to learn more about advertising opportunities with Yellow Pages. Plaintiff anticipated that he would get some information, think over the matter and call Yellow Pages in the future should he chose to advertise with them.
- 18. What Plaintiff encountered was a high pressure sales pitch. Plaintiff was told that he needed to advertise with Yellow Pages immediately because the rates were going to be going up and that this was the best time for Plaintiff to place his order for service.
- 19. Plaintiff inquired of Mr. Brown what the cost would be and which areas on the internet would the Plaintiff's ads appear; in addition, the Plaintiff requested information with respect to how prominent his ads would be in certain search engines.
- 20. Plaintiff was assured by Mr. Brown that he would receive prominent advertising in certain areas of the internet having to do with the following categories: 1) Plumbing Contractors; 2) Heating Contractors and Specialties; and, 3) Water Heaters (the "Appearance Categories").
- 21. In addition, Mr. Brown told the Plaintiff that Yellow Pages could provide a website hosting services as well.

- 22. Plaintiff inquired as to exactly where these ads could be found for the Appearance Categories, but received little detailed information from Mr. Brown. Instead, Mr. Brown pushed the Plaintiff to lock in his advertising rate.
- Plaintiff, feeling uneasy about the transaction, requested that Mr. Brown quote to him the exact monthly cost that Plaintiff would incur for the website services and listing in the Appearance Categories. Mr. Brown responded that he was unable to give him the exact price and that the exact price would appear in an agreement that would be sent to the Plaintiff.
- 24. Plaintiff stated that he would wait to receive the agreement and then contact Yellow Pages if he wanted to purchase services.

The Recorded Conversation

- 25. Mr. Brown stated that he would need to record the Plaintiff's assent to the terms and conditions of their agreement for Plaintiff to lock in the best rate and for Mr. Brown to send the agreement to the Plaintiff.
- 26. Plaintiff stated to Mr. Brown that he did not provide Plaintiff terms and conditions and that he wanted to look at the agreement.
- 27. Mr. Brown assured Plaintiff that this was procedural and that Plaintiff would still have the ability to look at the terms and conditions.
- 28. Consequently, the Plaintiff agreed to the recorded conversation; however, after the recording was started and Mr. Brown stated that Plaintiff was agreeing to all of the terms and conditions that they had discussed, the Plaintiff became uncomfortable responded again that he was uncomfortable with what Mr. Brown was saying and that he had not just agreed to any terms and conditions.

- 29. It appeared to the Plaintiff that Mr. Brown then ceased recording him and said that the only way they could complete the transaction was if Plaintiff agreed to everything that Mr. Brown was setting forth during the recording of the conversation. Mr. Brown assured the Plaintiff that the Plaintiff would receive everything in writing and would be able to look it over after receiving it.
- 30. Then it seemed to the Plaintiff that the recording was restarted by Mr. Brown and Mr. Brown resumed his earlier questions. Plaintiff answered Mr. Brown's questions.
- Mr. Brown then stated that Plaintiff would be receiving the agreement within twenty-four (24) hours of the Plaintiff and Mr. Brown's conversation.
- 32. Mr. Brown never asked Plaintiff for payment as such, Plaintiff thought that payment options would be contained in the documents that Mr. Brown was sending.

The Written Contract Arrives

- 33. At approximately 1:35 p.m., on October 31, 2008, Plaintiff received two documents:
 - a. Contract for Internet Yellow Pages.com Advertising (the "Contract");
 - b. Terms and Conditions for Internet Advertising (the "Terms and Conditions").
- 34. The Contract contained the following relevant statements and/or provisions:
 - a. The Contract was dated October 31, 2008;
 - b. The Contract listed the sales representative as Royce Brown;
 - c. The Sales Manager was listed as Christina Griffin;
 - d. There was a box called "billing preference" that stated:
 - i. "Payment in full is required <u>prior</u> to fulfillment of the products in this Order".
 - e. There was a box marked "Director Approval" that was blank.

- f. There was a box marked "Sales Mgr Approval" that was blank.
- g. The aforementioned Appearance Categories of 1) Plumbing Contractors; 2) Heating Contractors and Specialties; and, 3) Water Heaters were listed and were designated to be within the geographic area of Bergen NJ Metro.
 - The information of the exact places where Plaintiff's add was to be placed was not within the description.
- h. The actual prices were listed:
 - i. Plaintiff was to pay a monthly fee of \$49 for the website;
 - ii. Plaintiff was to pay a monthly fee of \$309 for the advertising listing;
 - iii. As such, Plaintiff's cost for one year was \$4,296.
- i. In the Notes section, the following is written: "Hi Al, Here is the agreement for your records."
- j. Below the Notes section, in very small tiny print (obfuscated by the poor facsimile quality) is the following statement:

This contract consists of and is governed by this Insertion Order pages [unreadable] hereto and in the Terms and Conditions for Internet Advertising, all of which are incorporated herein by reference. By signing below you are representing to Yellowpages.com: (1) that you have received and had an opportunity to review a copy of the TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR INTERNET ADVERTISING, (2) that they have the same force and effect as if given in full text on this document, and (3) that you acknowledge that Yellowpages.com's reliance upon your acceptance of them; however the version applicable to this contract shall be the latest dated version as of the date of your signature. You agree that you authority to bind the individual or company purchasing this advertising in all respect to this contract and the incorporated terms and conditions.

(hereinafter referred to sometimes as the "Signature Required Clause")

- 35. Plaintiff never signed the document referenced above at §34(j).
- Plaintiff never returned the document reference above at §34(j) to Defendant Yellow Pages. As such, Defendant Yellow Pages could not rely on Plaintiff's signature as proff the Plaintiff had "represent[ed] to Yellowpages.com: (1) that [he had] received and had an opportunity to review a copy of the TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR INTERNET ADVERTISING".
- 37. The Contract (also referred to by Yellow Pages as "Order") is attached hereto as **EXHIBIT "A"**.
- In addition, the Plaintiff received a two-page document called "Terms and Conditions for Internet Advertising". All of the terms are in very small print and the quality is obfuscated by the facsimile transmission.
- 39. The Terms and Conditions contained the following relevant clauses or statements:
 - a. #1 Scope states that <u>between the Terms and Conditions and the Order</u> (the Contract) that the Order (Contract) controls. In other words, to the extent that that the Contract and the Terms and Conditions conflict, the Contract controls (hereinafter referred to as the "Scope Clause").
 - b. #2 Term states that:

the term of the Agreement commences on the date of execution by the Plaintiff "(either in writing or by electronic signature including recorded oral acceptance of this Agreement of an Order presented by us and shall (subject to our right hereunder to terminate or suspend our performance or remove Advertising Products under circumstances specified in this Agreement) continue until we have fulfilled the Advertising Products specified in the Order for the initial Term specified in the Order. Unless otherwise provided in the Order and except as provided below in [unreadable] T&Cs, upon expiration of the Initial Term, the term

Term" unless you or we notify the other of its intent not to renew at least thirty days before expiration of the initial term . . . [u]nless otherwise provided in the Order, either you or we may terminate the Renewal Term, with or without cause. . . [n]either of us may terminate this Agreement during the initial term [first year] . . . [i]f you choose to have our Advertising Products removed from any site and/or our services discontinued prior to the end of the initial Term or Renewal Term . . . you shall notify us in writing and the unpaid balance for the entire Initial Term or Renewal Term, as the case may be, will become immediately due and owing.

- c. #4 Rates and Payments provides, in summary:
 - i. The billing cycle is every thirty (30) days;
 - ii. Yellow Pages can bill a consumer "for advertising products for which no rate is specified in the order" – in other words, Yellow Pages can bill their common "standard rate" if the Order/Contract does not specify a price (although there is no statement of what a standard rate is);
 - iii. Unless the consumer terminates the Agreement at the end of the initial term, then Yellow Pages renew the Consumer's contract at their "standard rates" although the Terms and Conditions neither defines what a standard rate is nor does it provide any calculus upon which one could derive some sort of reasonable basis for a standard rate;
 - iv. If payment is not received by the due date, then Yellow Pages can suspend all Products being serviced on behalf of the consumer;

- v. Yellow Pages allegedly reserves itself the right to charge late fees that will accrue, again, at a "standard rate" or the maximum rate permitted by law
- vi. Yellow Pages purportedly make the consumer responsible for any attorneys fees and costs that a Yellow Pages incurs in collecting any unpaid amounts;
- d. #6 Custom Domain Registration/Ownership of Work Product
 - i. Where the consumer has ordered advertising products that include hosting or operation of a website and where the consumer does not already own the domain name that the website will host Yellow Pages will purchase the website on behalf of the consumer or the consumer may transfer to the Yellow Pages the domain name onto Yellow Pages' server.
 - ii. After transfer of the domain name, Yellow Pages states that it may disable any hosted websites if payment is missed and that it will not release the domain name until the consumer has paid all of Yellow Pages' bills;
 - iii. Yellow Pages states that if it purchases the domain name on behalf of the Consumer, then Yellow Pages owns the domain name and not the Consumer;
 - iv. If the consumer does not provide transfer instructions to Yellow Pages upon the termination of the Agreement, then

Yellow Pages retains the right to allow the domain name registration to lapse or allow Yellow Pages to retain ownership.

e. #17 Telephone Conversations

- i. All telephone conversations may be recorded and the consumer consents to such.
- 40. The Terms and Conditions are attached hereto as EXHIBIT "B".
- 41. As stated above, the Plaintiff never signed the contract and never returned a signed document to Yellow Pages.
- 42. As stated above, Plaintiff contacted Yellow Pages for the first time on October 31, 2008.
- 43. Plaintiff received the Contract and Terms and Conditions from Yellow Pages on Friday, October 31, 2008.
- 44. On the following Monday, November 3, 2009, Plaintiff contacted Yellow Pages to inform Yellow Pages that he did not wish to pursue any relationship with Yellow Pages in the future. Plaintiff made several calls and also sent a fax to Royce Brown stating the same.
- 45. Plaintiff was told, when he spoke to Yellow Pages, that he could not cancel his order as the contract was already in force and in effect with Plaintiff's verbal recorded consent.

 Plaintiff was told this by Ted Becker who was a general sales manager in the sales division at Yellow Pages.
- 46. Shortly thereafter and completely without the Plaintiff's permission, Yellow Pages posted the Plaintiff's advertising information online and subsequently sent Plaintiff his first month's bill on November 22, 2008, and a second bill on December 22, 2008, stating that

- Plaintiff's account was past due. All of Plaintiff's other calls to Yellow Pages have been ignored.
- 47. Plaintiff has subsequently been threatened by representatives of Yellow Pages with adverse reporting on his credit report and Yellow Pages has stated they are going to commence a collection action against the Plaintiff in order to pressure the Plaintiff to make a payment to Yellow Pages.
- 48. Yellow Pages has stated that there is an enforceable contract between the Plaintiff and Yellow Pages. This is an inaccurate assessment of the legal relationships for two reasons:
 - a. First, Plaintiff and Yellow Pages never had a meeting of the minds on all of the essential terms of the contract while the Plaintiff and Mr. Brown were on the phone;
 - i. Even when Plaintiff received the Terms and Conditions from Yellow Pages, Plaintiff did not sign the accompanying contract order; in addition, Plaintiff never made any assenting representation to Yellow Pages upon which they could rely.
 - ii. The Terms and Conditions clearly state that, "in the event of any conflict between the terms of the Order [referred to as the Contract herein] and of these Terms and Conditions, the Order [referred to as the Contract herein] controls." The Contract/Order clearly states, "By signing below you are representing to Yellowpages.com: (1) that you have received and had an opportunity to review a copy of the TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR INTERNET ADVERTISING . . . (3) that

you acknowledge that Yellowpages.com's reliance upon your acceptance of them."

- As Plaintiff never signed the Contract/Order Plaintiff neither assented to the Terms and Conditions nor is Yellow Pages able to rely upon the Plaintiff's acquisence.
- 2. The purported right of Yellow Pages to rely upon the "recorded oral acceptance" of the Plaintiff is clearly contravened by the Contract/Order's requirement of the Plaintiff's signature."
 - a. Ted Becker's statement (the general manager of Yellow Pages), is inaccurate that the Contract was binding upon Plaintiff because of his oral consent.
- 49. As such, it is obvious that this a deceptive scheme designed to trap consumers into purchasing services from Yellow Pages and then extract money from them under an alleged oral recorded assent that is void as a matter of law (i.e., there is no meeting of the minds and the Contract/Order contravenes the oral acceptance premise).
- 50. Where a consumer wishes to cancel the contract or wishes to not be included they are threatened with collection actions and adverse information to be recorded on their credit report.

VI. CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS

- 51. All of the previous allegations are incorporated herein.
- 52. Plaintiff brings this action as a class action, on behalf of itself and all others similarly situated, pursuant to New Jersey Court Rule 4:32. The classes that plaintiff seeks to certify is:

a. "The Nonpayment Class":

- i. All individuals from the beginning of the class period until the present that received a Contract/Order and Terms and Conditions from Yellow Pages that contained substantively identical Scope and Signature Required Clauses² as the Plaintiff and did not sign the Contract/Order and who:
 - 1. Have received adverse credit reporting on their credit report; and/or,
 - 2. Are being pursued for payment by Yellow Pages; and/or,
 - 3. Have paid money to Yellow Pages for services.

b. "The Payment Class":

- i. All individuals from the beginning of the class period until the present that recorded their assent to Yellow Pages Terms and Conditions before they actually received the Yellow Pages' document entitled Terms and Conditions and who:
 - 1. Have received adverse credit reporting on their credit report; and/or,
 - 2. Are being pursued for payment by Yellow Pages; and/or,
 - 3. Have paid money to Yellow Pages for services.

² See Pages 10-12 infra.

- c. The members of each of the classes above will be referred to generally as "Class Members".
- The class is composed of thousands of persons and entities in New Jersey and worldwide.

 The prosecution of separate actions by individual members of this class would create a risk of inconsistent or varying adjudications with respect to individual members of the class, which would establish incompatible standards of conduct for Defendants' Yellow Pages and AT&T Inc.
- 54. In addition, Defendants' Yellow Pages and AT&T Inc. have acted and refused to act on grounds applicable generally to the class members, making final relief with respect to the class as a whole appropriate.
- As a victim of the Defendants' artifice to defraud, plaintiff is asserting claims that are typical of the claims of the class, and plaintiff will fairly and adequately represent and protect the interests of the class in that it has no interests antagonistic to those of the other members of the class. Plaintiff has retained counsels who are competent and experienced in the prosecution of class action litigation.
- A class action is superior to other available methods for the fair and efficient adjudication of this controversy. Since the damages suffered by individual class members may be relatively small, the expense and burden of individual litigation make it impracticable for the class members individually to seek redress for the wrongful conduct alleged here. If class treatment of these claims were not available, defendant would likely continue defrauding the general public, extorting and threatening the general populace with negative credit reporting, collection and legal actions, or would otherwise escape liability for their wrongdoing as challenged in this litigation--liability created as a result of

defendant's own efforts to profit at the expense of the general public. Each of the members of the class will have to obtain an equitable outcome that will insure that they fraudulent transaction is rescinded and all collection/legal efforts are ceased. In addition, those that have been forced to pay money as a result of the Defendant's actions, should have their money returned.

- 57. Common questions of law and fact exist as to all members of the class. The mechanism employed by the Defendant Yellow Pages to defraud the general population is identical. The facts for every class member will be identical in nature. After a recorded conversation, Yellow Pages would send the Class members a Contract/Order and accompanying Terms and Conditions. As such, the facts are common and similar enough to support a Class Action.
- 58. In addition, the question of whether or not the Contracts are binding will be identical for every member of the class:
 - a. The legal question of whether or not the Contract/Order and Terms and Conditions that contain the Scope and Signature Required clauses are binding upon one who does not sign the Contract/Order is identical;
 - b. The legal question of whether or not there was a meeting of the minds on the essential terms of the contract between the Class Members and Yellow Pages will be identical for every class member.
- 59. Thus, common questions predominate over any questions which may affect individual members of the class.
- 60. The names and addresses of class members are available from defendant or their agents.

 Notice can be provided to these owners by a combination of mail and published notice.

VII. ASCERTAINABLE LOSS ANALYSIS

- 61. All of the previous allegations are incorporated herein.
- 62. The Class Members have suffered an "ascertainable loss" as required by law in the following manner:
 - a. Class Members that have not paid Yellow Pages, but are the subject of or being threatened with adverse credit reporting, collection or legal action, the ascertainable loss, in conjunction with the Cox v. Sears Roebuck & Co., analysis (138 N.J. 2, 22-24 (1994)) is the estimate of costs for which the Defendants are attempting to hold the Plaintiff's responsible. As such, Plaintiff Class Members will ask for injunctive relief prohibiting Yellow Pages from enforcing the Contract/Order and Terms and Conditions not only retroactively for the Class Members but also prospectively for all future Consumers who may become victims.
 - b. Class Members that have paid Yellow Pages as a result of Yellow Page's fraudulent practices have suffered an ascertainable loss in the amount of their payments for services founded upon non-enforceable contracts the manner in which they were coerced into their contracts is fraudulent, malicious, and has no place in a sophisticated market place. As such, Plaintiff Class Members will request the rescission of contracts of which they are presently bound and the return of all of their monies paid as a result of the illegal agreement.
 - c. As with every action, Plaintiff reserves the right to amend this section as new allegations and claims become known to the Class Members through discovery.

VIII. COUNT I - JUDICIAL DECLARATION

- 63. All of the previous allegations are incorporated herein.
- 64. As it is evident that the Contract/Order and Terms of Conditions set forth above constitute an Agreement that is void as a matter of law.
 - a. The Contract/Order and Terms of Conditions that contained the Scope Clause and the Signature Required Clause and were not signed by a Class Member are void as a matter of law for reasons set forth above but summarized here:
 - i. The Scope clause says that "between the Terms and Conditions and the Order (the Contract) that the Order (Contract) controls." This clause was contained in paragraph 1 of the Terms and Conditions. The Signature Required Clause, contained within the controlling document, the Order (herein referred to as the Contract) states that "By signing below you are representing to Yellowpages.com: (1) that you have received and had an opportunity to review a copy of the INTERNET **CONDITIONS** FOR **TERMS AND** ADVERTISING, (2) that they have the same force and effect as if given in full text on this document, and (3) that you acknowledge that Yellowpages.com's reliance upon your acceptance of them "
 - ii. For Class Members that did not sign the Order/Contract there was no binding contract despite Yellow Pages declaration that the Contract is valid upon the recorded oral assent of the Class

Members. The Terms and Conditions wherein the oral consent is allegedly ratified and stated to be a valid form of acceptance is superseded by the terms of the Order/Contract that require the Class Member's signature.³

- b. For the Payment Class Members who have paid Yellow Pages as a result of their fraudulent conduct, it is evident that the agreements are unenforceable as they are victims of the artifice to defraud as are the Nonpayment Class Members.
 - i. When the Payment Class Members orally agreed to the Terms and Conditions through the recording with Yellow Pages representative, they did not have the benefit of the knowledge of all of the essential terms that would be contained in the Terms and Conditions that they would receive;
 - ii. As the Payment Class Members have made payments pursuant to a document that is void as a matter of law, all payments made to Yellow Pages should be returned to the Class.

WHEREFORE, the Class Members state that a declaratory judgment is both necessary and proper to set forth and determine the rights, obligations, and liabilities that exist among the Class Members and the Defendants (i.e. a Judicial Declaration is needed to void the alleged agreement between the Class and Yellow Pages as a matter of law).

³ Also contained in the Contract/Order is a statement that says, "[p]ayment in full is required prior to fulfillment of the products in this Order". As such, Yellow Pages is estopped from asserting reliance on a Class Members' actions where they did not received payment. See **EXHIBIT** "A".

IX. COUNT II - VIOLATIONS OF NEW JERSEY CONSUMER FRAUD ACT

- 65. All of the previous allegations are incorporated herein.
- As stated above in detail, the Defendants have employed an artifice to defraud and then extort advertising revenue from the Class Members.
 - a. Defendants trapped Class Members into a recordation wherein they allegedly agreed to certain terms and conditions without the terms and conditions being disclosed to the Class Member;
 - Defendants stated to Class Members that they would receive terms and conditions for review at a later date or said nothing at all about what the terms and conditions would be;
 - c. Where Class Members sought to rescind or alter the alleged Contract/Order in any manner, the Defendants would not allow any rescission alleging that the Class Member had already recorded his consent to the terms and conditions this action was unlawful for two reasons:
 - i. First, class members received Yellow Pages documents (purporting to be the Contract/Order and the Terms and Conditions) and the Scope Clause and the Signature Required Clause (pgs. 10-12, infra.) were included such that the Scope Clause states that the Contract/Order governs the Class Members' acceptance and the Contract/Order contained the Signature Required Clause that required, obviously, the Class Members' Signature. As such, the statement that the recordation of the Class Member's oral acquiescence sufficed as adequate acceptance is misleading and false.

- 1. When Yellow Pages stated that the Class Member was bound by the oral acceptance and this was a misrepresentation in addition they omitted to tell the Class Member that the documents they would received would require their signature to complete the agreement or that they were not telling them all of the essential terms upon which Yellow Pages sought to enforce a contract;
- 2. Yellow Pages intended that the Class Member rely upon the misrepresentations and omissions.
- 3. Plaintiff and Class Members relied upon the Defendant's misrepresentation of the legal contractual relations between the Plaintiff and Defendant.
 - a. This analysis by Yellow Pages was incorrect for two reasons:
 - First, the Scope Clause and the Signature Required Clause require the Class Member's written consent to the terms and conditions – where a Class Member did not sign the Contract/Order there is not an enforceable agreement;
 - ii. Second, even where a class member agreed orally to certain terms and conditions, those terms and conditions expressed to the Class Members did not contain all of the essential terms of a Contract and, until the Contract/Order was signed by the Class Member – there was no enforceable agreement.

- iii. Finally, even where a Class Member signed the Contract/Order the Contract should be rescinded as Class Members signed the Contract/Order not in order to purchase services from Yellow Pages but to avoid adverse credit reporting and legal and collection actions Class Members were coerced into signing because they were told that a legal agreement existed based upon the Class Members' alleged oral acquiescence to the terms and conditions of the Contract.
- 4. Plaintiff and Class Members have been damaged by the Defendant's misrepresentation in the following manners:
 - a. Class Members have been coerced into paying for advertising services they either did not want or wanted in another form or fashion;
 - Plaintiff and Class Members who have not paid for the service are now being threatened or have suffered adverse credit reporting, collection actions and legal actions;
 - c. Class Members may have suffered both of aforegoing damage scenarios. As stated in the aforegoing, Class Members, under auspices of the Cox analysis have suffered an ascertainable loss.

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ii. As such, it is obvious that Defendants are engaging in a deceptive business practice and such a deceptive practice is a violation of New Jersey law under N.J.S.A. 56:8-1 et seq.

X. COUNT III – UNJUST ENRICHMENT

- 67. All of the previous allegations are incorporated herein.
- 68. As enumerated above, Defendants have defrauded the Class Members through the pretense of omission and misrepresentation in order to extract financial gain from the Plaintiff Class Members.
- 69. One Class proposed for certification, is made up of Class Members that have paid Defendant Yellow Pages under duress, fraud and/or under false pretenses.
- 70. Defendants have received substantial amounts of money from the Payment Class Members, but the requisition of such remuneration is as a result of an illegal and void at law contract.
- 71. As such, the Defendants have been unjustly enriched at the expense of the Payment Class Members.

XI. COUNT IV - CLASS ACTION DECLARATION

- 72. All of the previous allegations are incorporated herein.
- 73. As stated above, Plaintiff has proposed two classes of members to be approved by the Court (i.e. the Nonpayment Class and the Payment Class).

a. "The Nonpayment Class":

- i. All individuals from the beginning of the class period until the present that received a Contract/Order and Terms and Conditions from Yellow Pages that contained substantively identical Scope and Signature Required Clauses as the Plaintiff and did not sign the Contract/Order and who:
 - 1. Have received adverse credit reporting on their credit report; and/or,
 - 2. Are being pursued for payment by Yellow Pages; and/or,
 - 3. Have paid money to Yellow Pages for services.

b. "The Payment Class":

- i. All individuals from the beginning of the class period until the present that recorded their assent to Yellow Pages Terms and Conditions before they actually received the Yellow Pages' document entitled Terms and Conditions and who:
 - 1. Have received adverse credit reporting on their credit report; and/or,
 - 2. Are being pursued for payment by Yellow Pages; and/or,
 - 3. Have paid money to Yellow Pages for services.

XII. PRAYER FOR RELIEF

Plaintiff, on behalf of itself and on behalf of the members of the class defined in this complaint, requests judgment and relief as follows:

- I. An order certifying that this action may be maintained as a class action;
- II. Compensatory damages in an amount to be proven at trial;
- III. Equitable and injunctive relief as permitted by law or equity, including the rescission of all contracts that fall within the purview of the Class Member's complaint
- IV. Equitable relief in the form of an injunction preventing Yellow Pages deceptive practice to continue into the future;
- V. A judgment imposing a constructive trust upon the Plaintiff's assets;
- VI. An Order requiring Defendants to place assets or post a bond in an equal amount to the value of the assets upon which the Trust is placed;
- VII. Against the Defendants awarding the Class Members treble the amount of their damages pursuant to N.J.S.A. 56:8-19;
- VIII. Against the Defendants awarding the Class Members reasonable counsel fees, filing fees, cost of investigation, and costs of this lawsuit, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 56:8-19;
- IX. An order awarding plaintiff reasonable attorneys' fees, costs and expenses incurred in connection with this suit (on non-New Jersey Consumer Fraud Act Claims).
- X. Pre- and post-judgment interest; and
- XI. Such other and further relief as the court may deem necessary or appropriate.

XIII. DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

Plaintiff demands a trial by jury.

XIV. DESIGNATION OF TRIAL COUNSEL

Pursuant to Rule 4:25-4, Paul I. Perkins is designated as trial counsel.

XV. CERTIFICATION OF NO OTHER ACTIONS

Pursuant to Rule 4:5-1, it is hereby stated that the matter in controversy is not the subject of any other action pending in any other court or of a pending arbitration proceeding to the best of our knowledge or belief. Also, to the best of our belief, no other action or arbitration proceeding is contemplated. Further, other than the parties set forth in this pleading, we know of no other parties that should be joined in the above action. In addition, we recognize the continuing obligation of each party to file and serve on all parties and the Court an amended certification if there is a change in the facts stated in this original certification.

XVII. COUNSEL SIGNATURE PAGE

Date:

Paramus, New Jersey

By:

Paul I. Perkins, Esq.

LYNCH LAW FIRM, P.C.

45 Eisenhower Drive Paramus, NJ 07652 (800) 656-9529 (888) 271-9726

paulperkins@lynchlawyers.com

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11. Assignment. You may not read, sastyn, learning or coppyte any of your done, dulies or obligations without our prior written consent, which we may sent or waithout in use exercise of our execution, assume off of your rights, dulies or obligations. Any strong to read, assign, transfer or delegate outs rights, dulies or delegation without or to exercise of our exercises, assign, transfer or delegation outs rights, dulies or delegation without or to exercise of our exercises of Congresses were on the mediterrant and sponsition a court of the expression and state of or topologically of any line. In this is remained for any parson or only of any line.

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BERGEN COUNTY COURTHOUSE SUPERIOR COURT LAW DIV BERGEN COUNTY JUSTICE CTR RM 415 HACKENSACK NJ 07601-7680

TRACK ASSIGNMENT NOTICE

COURT TELEPHONE NO. (201) 527-2600 COURT HOURS

DATE:

RE:

APRIL 14, 2009 KOWALSKI VS YELLOWPAGES COM LLC

DOCKET: BER L -003316 09

THE ABOVE CASE HAS BEEN ASSIGNED TO: TRACK 4.

DISCOVERY IS PRESUMPTIVELY 450 DAYS BUT MAY BE ENLARGED OR SHORTENED BY THE JUDGE AND RUNS FROM THE FIRST ANSWER OR 90 DAYS FROM SERVICE ON THE FIRST DEFENDANT, WHICHEVER COMES FIRST.

THE MANAGING JUDGE ASSIGNED IS: HON JONATHAN N. HARRIS

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, CONTACT TEAM AT: (201) 527-2600.

IF YOU BELIEVE THAT THE TRACK IS INAPPROPRIATE YOU MUST FILE A CERTIFICATION OF GOOD CAUSE WITHIN 30 DAYS OF THE FILING OF YOUR PLEADING. PLAINTIFF MUST SERVE COPIES OF THIS FORM ON ALL OTHER PARTIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH R.4:5A-2.

ATTENTION:

ATT: PAUL I. PERKINS LYNCH LAW FIRM 45 EISENHOWER DRIVE PARAMUS NJ 07652

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